

This is an official

DHEC Health Advisory

Distributed via the South Carolina Health Alert Network

May 8, 2008, 5:00 PM

***Shigella* Outbreaks in Richland and Lexington Counties**

This Health Advisory is to provide information about increased incidence of Shigellosis in Richland and Lexington Counties.

- In the past two weeks, *Shigella* outbreaks have been confirmed in two area schools, one public and one private, and in two daycares. In addition to these outbreaks, DHEC has been receiving increased numbers of reports of non-linked *Shigella* cases, mostly in infants and young children.
- The spectrum of Shigellosis manifestations ranges from loose, watery stools without systemic symptoms to more severe presentations with fever, cramps, and bloody diarrhea.
- Although most cases of shigellosis are self-limited (48-72 hours) and do not require antimicrobial treatment, treatment is recommended for severe cases and for shortening duration of diarrhea and eradication of organism in stools.
- Control measures to interrupt transmission in child care and school settings include:
 - exclusion of individuals with diarrhea (**criteria for childcare including school students in K3, K4, and K5 requires exclusion until diarrhea is resolved AND either a) completion of 5 days of antibiotic therapy OR b) a negative stool culture.**)
 - meticulous hand hygiene
 - implementation of enhanced environmental hygiene in the facility and in students' homes.
- For schools or daycares experiencing **two or more cases** of *Shigella* in a single classroom, please provide parents a copy of the attached letter and the *Shigella* fact sheet for guidance, and contact DHEC Region 3 Epi at 803-667-0756.
- Providers may desire to give a copy of the *Shigella* fact sheet to their patients (see attached).
- For further information, contact Donna Coyle, RN BSN, at 803-576-2749.

DHEC Contact Information for Reportable Diseases and Reporting Requirements

Reporting of Shigellosis cases is included in the current DHEC List of Reportable Conditions as a “report within 7 days” condition. However, outbreaks or clusters of cases are considered “Immediately Reportable by Phone” conditions. Healthcare providers are required to report suspected or confirmed cases to their Regional Public Health Offices, at the contact numbers listed below.

Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

Regional Public Health Offices – 2008

Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.

Region 1

Anderson, Oconee

220 McGee Road
Anderson, SC 29625
Phone: (864) 260-4358
Fax: (864) 260-5623
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-298-4442

Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda

1736 S. Main Street
Greenwood, SC 29646
Phone: 1-888-218-5475
Fax: (864) 942-3690
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

Region 2

Greenville, Pickens

PO Box 2507
200 University Ridge
Greenville, SC 29602-2507
Phone: (864) 282-4139
Fax: (864) 282-4373
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-993-1186

Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union

PO Box 4217
151 E. Wood Street
Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217
Phone: (864) 596-2227, x- 210
Fax: (864) 596-3443
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-993-1186

Region 3

Chester, Lancaster, York

PO Box 817
1833 Pageland Highway
Lancaster, SC 29721
Phone: (803) 286-9948
Fax: (803) 286-5418
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-867-3886

Region 3 (continued)

Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland

2000 Hampton Street
Columbia, SC 29204
Phone: (803) 576-2749
Fax: (803) 576-2993
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-554-9915

Region 4

Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter

PO Box 1628
105 North Magnolia Street
Sumter, SC 29150
Phone: (803) 773-5511
Fax: (803) 775-9941
Nights/Weekends: 1-877-831-4647

Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marlboro, Marion

145 E. Cheves Street
Florence, SC 29506
Phone: (843) 661-4830
Fax: (843) 661-4859
Nights / Weekends: (843) 660-8145

Region 5

Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg

PO Box 1126
1550 Carolina Avenue
Orangeburg, SC 29116
Phone: (803) 533-7199
Fax: (803) 533-7134
Nights / Weekends: (803) 954-8513

Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40
Aiken, SC 29801
Phone: (803) 642-1618
Fax: (803) 643-8386
Nights / Weekends: (803) 827-8668 or
1-800-614-1519

Region 6

Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg

1931 Industrial Park Road
Conway, SC 29526-5482
Phone: (843) 915-8804
Fax: (843) 365-0085
Nights / Weekends: (843) 381-6710

Region 7

Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600
N. Charleston, SC 29405
Phone: (843) 746-3860
Fax: (843) 746-3851
Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

Region 8

Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper

219 S. Lemacks Street
Walterboro, SC 29488
Phone: (843) 549-1516, x-214
Fax: (843) 549-6845
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-614-4698

DHEC Bureau of Disease Control Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology

1751 Calhoun Street
Box 101106
Columbia, SC 29211
Phone: (803) 898-0861
Fax: (803) 898-0897
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902



www.scdhec.gov

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.



C. Earl Hunter, Commissioner

Promoting and protecting the health of the public and the environment.

May 8, 2008

Dear Parent,

Several cases of Shigellosis, have occurred in the class your child attends. Shigellosis is an infectious disease caused by a group of bacteria called *Shigella*. Most people who are infected with *Shigella* develop diarrhea, fever, and stomach cramps starting a day or two after they are exposed to the bacteria. The diarrhea is often bloody. Shigellosis usually resolves in 5 to 7 days.

The *Shigella* bacteria pass from one infected person to the next. *Shigella* are present in the diarrheal stools of infected persons while they are sick and for up to a week or two afterwards. *Shigella* infections may be acquired from eating contaminated food and water, however the **primary way they are acquired is from person to person.**

Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent shigellosis. However, the **spread of *Shigella* from an infected person to other persons can be stopped by frequent and careful handwashing with soap and water.** Frequent and careful handwashing is important among all age groups and should be encouraged.

If your child develops a fever, stomach cramps, and diarrhea, please take him/her to your physician and keep him/her home until after either treatment with an appropriate antibiotic for five days, or a negative stool culture, and no diarrhea for twenty-four hours. You may take this letter with you. Your child's physician will want to collect a stool sample from your child.

If you have questions please call the health department @ [576-2749](tel:576-2749).

Donna Coyle, RB, BSN, BS
Epidemiology Nurse Coordinator
Region III, Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, & Richland Counties

Shigellosis Fact Sheet

Shigellosis is an infection of the intestines caused by a bacterium called *Shigella*

It causes symptoms such as:

- Diarrhea (sometimes with blood or mucus)
- Stomach cramps
- Fever
- Nausea or vomiting

Symptoms may occur from 1 to 7 days after exposure but usually occurs within 1 to 3 days. Symptoms last an average of 4 to 7 days. Some infected people, especially adults, may not show any symptoms.

Shigellosis is most common in young children

Anyone can get shigellosis, but those who may be at greater risk include children in child care centers and their parents, foreign travelers to certain countries, institutionalized people, and men who have sex with men.

People get shigellosis from other people

Shigella is found in the feces (stool) of infected persons. *Shigella* may be spread to others by the stool of infected persons while they are sick and possibly for up to 4 weeks after they feel better. Infected people who don't show any symptoms of shigellosis may also spread *Shigella* through their stool for several weeks. The germ is spread to other people either by direct contact with an infected person's stool or by eating or drinking contaminated food or water.

Handwashing is the most important way to prevent infection

Wash hands with soap and water:

- After using the toilet,
- After changing diapers,
- After touching any stool-soiled material,
- Before handling food or drink,
- Before eating

Help young children to wash their hands

See your doctor if you have diarrhea or possible shigellosis

- Most people recover on their own. Some may require fluids or antibiotics.
- Antidiarrheal agents such as Imodium or Lomotil are likely to make the illness worse and should be avoided.
- Foodhandlers, health care and child care workers, children in child care, or persons in the family of such people who have shigellosis should contact their local health department to get specific recommendations.